

## Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

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NODIS  
FROM THE SECRETARY FOR AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, IR, XF

SUBJECT: BRIEFING FOR THE SHAH ON BEGIN VISIT

1. I WANT TO BE SURE THAT THE SHAH HAS A FULL AND ACCURATE PICTURE OF WHERE WE STAND NOW IN THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE NEGOTIATIONS AS RESULT OF THE PRESIDENT'S TALKS WITH BEGIN MARCH 21-22. PLEASE CONVEY TO HIM FOLLOWING REPORT. PLEASE TELL THE SHAH THAT WHILE THE TALKS WITH BEGIN WERE DIFFICULT, WE THINK THEY SERVED THE PURPOSE WE SET FOR THEM AND MARK AN IMPORTANT STEP IN THE PEACE PROCESS. I PARTICULARLY WANT HIM TO KNOW THAT THE USG IS DETERMINED TO PERSEVERE AND TO SUCCEED IN THIS EFFORT, AND THAT OBVIOUSLY WE WILL BE COUNTING ON HELP THAT THE SHAH CAN GIVE US AS WE PROCEED. WE WILL OF COURSE WELCOME ANY THOUGHTS THE SHAH MAY HAVE.

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2. THE VISIT SHOULD BE VIEWED IN RELATION TO WHERE WE ARE IN THE PEACE PROCESS. FOLLOWING THE INITIAL MOMENTUM GENERATED BY THE JERUSALEM AND ISMAILIA SUMMITS, WHEN THE NEGOTIATIONS BEGAN TO GET DOWN TO THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES PROGRESS SLOWED ACCORDINGLY. WE DISCUSSED THESE ISSUES WITH PRESIDENT SADAT IN FEBRUARY AND FOLLOWING

FURTHER GROUNDWORK THROUGH ATHERTON'S TALKS IN THE AREA FELT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO DISCUSS THEM ALSO WITH PRIME MINISTER BEGIN.

3. THE TALKS BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER BEGIN DURING THIS VISIT WERE THE MOST PROBING AND DETAILED THEY EVER HAD. PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER MET FOR TWO HOURS MORNING MARCH 21 AND CONTINUED TALKS AT PRIVATE DINNER THAT EVENING AND ON MORNING MARCH 22. SECRETARY PURSUED DISCUSSIONS AT DINNER WITH DAYAN MARCH 21, AND IN MEETINGS AFTERNOONS MARCH 21 AND 22. THROUGHOUT THE VISIT THE PRESIDENT KEPT THE CONVERSATION FOCUSED ON THE CRITICAL ISSUES OF WITHDRAWAL AND THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION AND LEFT BEGIN IN NO DOUBT OF THE CRUCIAL DECISIONS ISRAEL MUST MAKE TO KEEP THE PEACE PROCESS GOING. BEGIN DID NOT GO BEYOND PRESENT POSITIONS NOR DID WE EXPECT HIM TO DURING THIS VISIT, BUT WE BELIEVE THAT HE WILL GO HOME DEEPLY AWARE THAT THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT NOW FACES DECISIONS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED. THE PUBLIC HANDLING OF THE TALKS WAS SUCH THAT THE PUBLIC BOTH IN THE U.S. AND IN ISRAEL KNOWS THAT THESE WERE DIFFICULT MEETINGS WHERE THE ISSUES WERE SQUARELY JOINED.

4. THE PRESIDENT FORCEFULLY STATED THE DEEP AMERICAN INTEREST IN AND COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HE EMPHASIZED HIS COMMITMENT TO CONTINUE WORKING  
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WITH THE PARTIES IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE TO REMOVE OBSTACLES TO PROGRESS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. THE PRESIDENT STRESSED THE NEED FOR EARLY CONCLUSION OF A MEANINGFUL DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES WHICH MUST DEAL WITH THE WITHDRAWAL ISSUE AND THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION IN TERMS THAT WILL PROVIDE A CREDIBLE BASIS FOR BROADER NEGOTIATIONS.

5. CENTRAL FOCUS THROUGHOUT THE TWO DAYS OF CONVERSATION WAS ON THE NECESSITY FOR ISRAEL TO ACCEPT UNEQUIVOCALLY THAT ALL THE PRINCIPLES OF RESOLUTION 242, INCLUDING WITHDRAWAL, APPLY ON ALL FRONTS. THE PRESIDENT MADE CLEAR THAT ACCEPTANCE OF THE PRINCIPLE OF WITHDRAWAL, INCLUDING ON THE WEST BANK AND GAZA, IS ESSENTIAL TO PROGRESS IN THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. BEGIN ARGUED THAT NOTHING IN ISRAEL'S PEACE PROPOSALS IS INCONSISTENT WITH 242; THAT EVERYTHING IS NEGOTIABLE; AND THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO PRE-CONDITIONS FOR NEGOTIATIONS. WE POINTED OUT THAT THIS ISRAELI POSITION AVOIDS THE BASIC ISSUE OF WHETHER ISRAEL WILL ULTIMATELY WITHDRAW, IN THE CONTEXT OF PEACE COMMITMENTS, SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS AND AGREED BORDERS, AND ALLOW THE PALESTINIANS A REAL VOICE IN DETERMINING THEIR OWN FUTURE. PRESIDENT MADE CLEAR THAT WHILE DISCUSSIONS COULD

BE STARTED FROM THE BEGIN SELF-RULE PLAN, WE DO NOT  
BE STARTED FROM THE BEGIN SELF-RULE PLAN, WE DO NOT  
CONSIDER THE PLAN, AS IT NOW STANDS, TO OFFER ADEQUATE  
ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA.  
THE PRESIDENT PUT FORWARD A NUMBER OF EXPLORATORY THOUGHTS

ON HOW TO BRIDGE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PARTIES  
REGARDING WEST BANK AND GAZA ISSUES AND ALSO REGARDING  
SINAI. HOWEVER, WE DID NOT, AS SOME PRESS REPORTS ALLEGE,  
PUT FORWARD A FORMAL U.S. PROPOSAL FOR THE WEST BANK  
AND GAZA.

6. THE PRESIDENT REITERATED THE U.S. POSITION REGARDING  
ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. IN A  
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SEPARATE MEETING, FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN TOLD SECRETARY  
VANCE THAT THERE WILL BE NO NEW SETTLEMENTS IN SINAI WHILE  
NEGOTIATIONS ARE UNDERWAY AND THAT EACH NEW SETTLEMENT  
IN THE WEST BANK WILL REQUIRE SPECIFIC CABINET APPROVAL.  
THE SECRETARY EMPHASIZED THAT WE WOULD VIEW ANY NEW  
SETTLEMENTS WITH THE UTMOST SERIOUSNESS.

7. WE BELIEVE THESE MEETINGS WENT FARTHER THAN HAS EVER  
BEEN POSSIBLE BEFORE TOWARD ENGAGING THE ISRAELIS ON THE  
REAL ISSUES, AND THAT WE ACCOMPLISHED MOST OF WHAT WE  
THOUGHT COULD BE ACHIEVED IN THIS SESSION. WHAT IS  
NEEDED NOW IS TIME FOR THE EFFECTS OF THIS VISIT TO BE  
DIGESTED IN ISRAEL, FOR BEGIN AND HIS COLLEAGUES TO  
RETHINK AMONG THEMSELVES THE DIFFICULT DECISIONS AHEAD  
AND FOR THEM TO WORK THESE DECISIONS THROUGH THE ISRAELI  
POLITICAL PROCESS. WE ARE SEEING NOW, AS A RESULT OF THE  
PRESIDENT'S MEETINGS WITH BEGIN, THE SIGNS IN ISRAEL OF A  
PROFOUND REAPPRAISAL. CLEAR PRESENTATION TO ISRAEL OF THE  
U.S. POSITION ON THE KEY ISSUES DURING THE VISIT SHOULD  
MAKE IT OBVIOUS TO THE ISRAELIS THAT THE U.S. IS DETER-  
MINED TO MOVE THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS FORWARD. IT IS  
ESSENTIAL NOW, AS DEBATE INTENSIFIES IN ISRAEL, THAT ALL  
CONCERNED DO EVERY THING POSSIBLE TO HOLD OUT TO THOSE  
ISRAELIS LOOKING FOR SERIOUS COMPROMISE THE PROSPECT OF  
REALISTIC PROGRESS ON GROUNDS THAT PROMISE SECURITY FOR  
ISRAEL. IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT, IN THIS RESPECT, THAT  
ALL CONCERNED ON THE ARAB SIDE AVOID STATEMENTS OR ACTIONS  
THAT MIGHT BE UNHELPFUL.

8. WE DID NOT WANT THIS MEETING TO BE DIVERTED FROM  
THE CENTRAL ISSUE OF PEACE, AND THEREFORE SOUTHERN  
LEBANON WAS DISCUSSED ONLY BRIEFLY. THE ISRAELI GOVERN-  
MENT HAD ALREADY AGREED TO COMPLY WITH UN RESOLUTIONS 425  
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AND 426 AND HAD DECLARED A UNILATERAL CEASEFIRE. PRIME MINISTER BEGIN AND FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN ASSURED US THAT ISRAEL WILL WITHDRAW FROM LEBANON. WE BELIEVE THAT THE SUCCESSFUL ESTABLISHMENT OF A UN FORCE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON WILL ITSELF SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVE THE CLIMATE FOR PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. IT IS OUR HOPE THAT THE PLO WILL COOPERATE WITH THE CEASEFIRE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LEBANESE

GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY THROUGHOUT SOUTH LEBANON. WE ARE URGING THE ISRAELIS TO TAKE APPROPRIATE STEPS TO ASSURE SIMILAR COOPERATION BY CHRISTIAN MILITIAS IN THE SOUTH.

9. IT WILL HAVE BEEN NOTED THAT THERE WAS NO PRESS STATEMENT AT THE END OF THE VISIT. WE WERE UNWILLING TO MAKE AN ANODYNE STATEMENT AND CHOSE TO MAKE THE PUBLIC AWARE OF OUR POSITIONS IN OTHER WAYS, NOTABLY THROUGH PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AT THE END OF THE SECOND DAY'S MEETING AND SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE. FYI: YOU SHOULD POINT OUT THAT MARCH 23 WASHINGTON POST CARRIES FOUR-COLUMN HEADLINE ABOUT "GRIM TALKS" AND "SHARP CONFLICT ON THE ISSUES" AND FEATURED PRESIDENT CARTER'S STATEMENT THAT PEACE STILL SEEMS FAR AWAY. ATHERTON DID BACKGROUNDER IMMEDIATELY AFTER CONCLUSION OF MEETINGS, SENT SEPTTEL, WHICH CLEARLY STATED THE U.S. POSITION. THE PRESIDENT MET THE SAME DAY WITH THE HIRC AND AT BREAKFAST THURSDAY MORNING WITH THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE. THE SECRETARY ALSO ADDRESSED THESE ISSUES IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE FRIDAY. END FYI. WE BELIEVE THERE IS INCREASINGLY CLEAR PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL UNDERSTANDING OF WHERE THINGS NOW STAND AND SUPPORT FOR THE ADMINISTRATION.

10. IN SUM, AS RESULT OF PRESIDENT'S MEETINGS WITH BEGIN, THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ISRAEL'S AND OUR VIEWS ON MAJOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE ISSUES WERE CLEARLY DEFINED AND THOROUGHLY DISCUSSED AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL. WE BELIEVE

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ISRAEL WILL NEED PERIOD AHEAD TO SORT OUT THEIR RESPONSE TO THE POSITIONS WE HAVE TAKEN. AS TO NEXT STEPS, WE BELIEVE AN IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE REMAINS ACHIEVING AGREEMENT ON A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES WHICH WILL CONSTITUTE THE FRAMEWORK FOR A COMPREHENSIVE MIDDLE EAST PEACE AND FACILITATE BOTH A RENEWAL AND A BROADENING OF DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS. WE PLAN TO BE IN TOUCH SHORTLY WITH

ISRAELIS AND EGYPTIANS AND OTHER INTERESTED  
PARTIES AND WILL DETERMINE IN THESE CONSULTATIONS HOW  
SPECIFICALLY TO PROCEED. VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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